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ABSTRACT

A statewide survey of Texas secondary school English teachers and their administrators was conducted to identify in-service needs expressed by teachers and perceived by administrators. Questionnaires were mailed to randomly selected teachers, principals, and central-office administrative personnel. An analysis of the responses indicated that the five items ranked as greatest in-service needs were the following: (1) providing for the disabled reader in the classroom; (2) individualizing instruction; (3) providing enrichment activities for the superior student; (4) providing a fused program which incorporates oral language, literature, composition, listening, and reading skills; and (5) providing instruction which would help students to develop better oral and written communication skills. Other items for which respondents indicated a positive need, although they were not ranked in the first five items by the majority of respondents, included diagnosing student needs and developing student creativity. (GW)

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A Study of Needs for Possible Inservice Education Programs as Expressed by Secondary English Teachers and as Perceived by their Administrators

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Abstract. A statewide survey of English teachers and their administrators in Texas revealed needs for English teacher inservice in: (1) Providing for students reading below grade level, (2) Enrichment activities for superior students, (3) Individualizing instruction, and (4) Diagnosing student needs.

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A Study of Needs for Possible Inservice Education Programs as Expressed by Secondary English Teachers and as Perceived by their Administrators

Purpose of Study

Two major purposes of this study were (1) to identify specific inservice education needs of Texas secondary English teachers and to determine their secondary administrators' perception of those needs; and, (2) to determine the highest ranked inservice needs of Texas secondary English teachers and to determine if their administrators perceived those needs to be greatest.

Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis

Questionnaires were mailed to randomly selected secondary English teachers in Texas, secondary school principals, and central office administrative personnel. The major section of the questionnaire consisted of three subsections: (a) Specific inservice content with opportunity for teachers and administrators to express degree of need on a five-point continuum from none to greatest, (b) opportunity for teachers and administrators to indicate their greatest five needs in rank order, (c) and an open-ended request for identification of any additional needs.

Treatment of Data

Frequency of response and percentage of total response to each item were determined. Both totals and grade level responses were analyzed and conclusions were drawn. Questionnaire items marked "great need" or "greatest need" were treated as positive responses, and items marked "no

need" or "little need" as negative responses. Items marked "some need" were treated as arousing neither strong negative nor strong positive responses from subjects.

Findings

A majority of teachers and administrators expressed a positive need for the following four items: (1) Providing for the disabled reader in the classroom--73 percent, (2) Providing enrichment activities for the superior student--61 percent, (3) Individualizing instruction--60 percent, and (4) Diagnosing student needs--51 percent.

Responding teachers and administrators indicated a positive need for the following nine additional items: (5) Providing instruction which would help students to develop better communication skills through written and oral composition--47 percent; (6) Developing student creativity--46 percent; (7) Providing a fused program which incorporates oral language, literature, composition, listening, and reading skills--44 percent; (8) Providing sequential instruction in grammar and language development--41 percent; (9) Developing motivational techniques and instructional games--41 percent; (10) Using value clarification tools--34 percent; (11) Humanizing instruction through understanding the physical, emotional, and psychological development of students--32 percent; (12) Grouping students--31 percent; and (13) Developing research techniques in the English language arts area for the purpose of assessing validity for new and existing programs--30 percent.

Responding teachers and administrators expressed "no need" or "little need" for the following listed inservice items: (14) Interpreting literature--

48 percent, (15) Sending and receiving nonverbal messages--42 percent, (16) Developing classroom management techniques--37 percent, (17) Using the library or learning resource center--35 percent, (18) Writing performance objectives which include evaluation techniques for measuring student growth--33 percent, (19) Questioning techniques--32 percent, and (20) Using various technological devices--29 percent.

When asked to rank order items according to greatest need, a majority of teachers and administrators included (1) Providing for the disabled reader in the classroom--68 percent and (2) Individualizing instruction--61 percent. In addition teachers and administrators included these items in their top five rankings: (3) Providing enrichment activities for the superior student--43 percent; (4) Providing a fused program which incorporates oral language, literature, composition, listening, and reading skills--40 percent; and (5) Providing instruction which would help students to develop better communication skills through written and oral composition--37 percent.

Conclusions

A majority of secondary English teachers have needs for specific inservice education programs in content areas and are willing to express those needs when provided opportunity. Secondary administrators have a perceptive awareness of these specific needs of their English teachers.

A majority of secondary English teachers and their administrators perceive the same items of greatest need although they do not agree on the priority ranking of those items within the top five.

Recommendations for Planning Inservice Programs for Secondary English Teachers

Inservice programs for middle or junior high school English teachers represented by this study should include information on (1) Providing for the disabled reader in the classroom; (2) Individualizing instruction, (3) Providing and presenting activities for enrichment experiences for the superior student in the classroom; (4) Providing a program which fuses oral language, literature, composition, listening, and reading skills for all students; and (5) Determining and developing instruction which would help students communicate better through the use of oral and written composition.

Inservice programs for high school English teachers in Texas should include the above five items plus: (1) Providing examples of informal testing devices which could be used in diagnosing individual student needs, and (2) Providing specific examples of methods and activities for developing student creativity.

Recommendations for Further Study

Study in the following areas is recommended:

(1) A replication over a larger geographical area to determine if needs expressed by secondary English teachers in other areas are the same as those expressed by English teachers in Texas;

(2) An investigation of expressed needs of elementary teachers and administrators to ascertain expressed needs of teachers and perceptions of their administrators with regard to their needs;

(3) An investigation seeking to determine if secondary teachers in other academic areas also see little need for research activities and evaluation techniques as topics for inservice education;

(4) Investigations of attitude of English teachers toward change, particularly in the areas of technological devices, of the concept of the library as a learning resource center, and of competencies needed by all teachers;

(5) An investigation seeking to determine if secondary teachers in other academic areas also see little need for inservice education programs related to generic teaching competencies needed by all teachers;

(6) Investigations to determine if secondary administrators are as perceptive of the inservice education needs and priorities of needs of teachers in other academic areas as they are in the area of English; and

(7) Investigation to distinguish between teachers need for inservice programs to develop students' oral communication skills and their need for inservice programs to develop students' written communication skills.

Additional Information

Bauer, Mary Elizabeth Huss. "A Study of Needs and Presentation Preferences for Possible Inservice Education Programs as Expressed by Secondary English Teachers and as Perceived by Secondary Administrators in Texas." Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, College of Education, University of Texas, 1975, under the direction of Zenobia Verner.